GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:235
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
RADIATION RISK
RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY;VSM (RETD.) COL. CHOUDHARY

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government have been drawn to the news-item captioned `Crime Branch probing radiation deaths` and `Overworked X-ray staff face radiation risk` published in the Times of India dated September 29, 2001 and November 5, 2001;

(b) if so, facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon; and

(d) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to safeguard the lives of x-ray staffs, especially after the deaths of three Radiology technicians due to Cancer after over exposure?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a)to(d): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 235 FOR 05.12.2001.

Government is aware of the news items referred in the Question in which mainly the following issues have been reported:

(i) The Members of the Municipal Radiographers Union working in Delhi have alleged that three technicians of X-Ray Department have contracted cancer due to allegedly over-exposure while working in X-Ray Department.

(ii) The Radiographers` Association has alleged contravention of norms set out by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act of 1962, the Radiation Protection Rules of 1971 & the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board Act of 1986.

(iii) The Radiographers` Association has further alleged the negligence by the hospital authorities.

So far as Dr. RML Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital and LHMC & Associated Hospitals are concerned, no radiographers/radiology technicians have been found to have excess radiation. The radiation exposure to the Radiographers/X-ray technicians is constantly monitored by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). The radiographers/radiology technicians are using protective measures to prevent radiation like TLD badges, lead gown, lead gloves, lead goggles, lead screen, etc., while in radiation zone. The equipments used are of specifications prescribed by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. The radiation protection rules are strictly followed.

Safety norms for Radiographers working in the Radiology Departments have been issued on 22.1.2001 by the Directorate General of Health Services to the Health Secretaries of all the States and UTs, Medical Council of India and all Central Government Hospitals. A copy of the same is annexed.
In so far as All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Hospital/Government of NCT of Delhi are concerned the information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

ANNEXURE

F.No. C-18018/1/2000-MH Directorate General of Health Services (MH Section)
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi.
Dated: 22.1.2001.

To

1. Health Secretaries of all the States and UTs.

2. The Secretary,
Medical Council of India,
Kotla Road, Temple Lane, New Delhi.

3. The Medical Superintendent, S.J. Hospital, New Delhi.

4. The Medical Superintendent, Dr. R.M.L. Hospital, New Delhi.

5. The Principal & Medical Superintendent, LHMC & Associated Hospitals, New Delhi.
6. The Director, JIPMER, Pondicherry.

Sub: Safety norms of Radiographers working in Radiology Department.

Sir,

I am directed to say that a case came up before the National Human Rights Commission (Case No.1400/12/99-2000) with regard to the representation given by Shri Sivakant Vajpai, President, M.P. Radiographers Association, Indore regarding lack of care and information in operating radiological equipments which causes health hazard in the hospitals.

In this regard, a meeting of the experts was held in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare who have recommended following norms for Radiographers, working in the Radiology Department for further necessary action:-

1 . A Radiographer should possess 10+2 with science and having minimum two years diploma course in Radiography from a recognized institution. He should have also some working experience in a reputed institution.

2. Personal monitoring badge should always be used while on duty. Specific guidelines as prescribed by BARC should be followed so far as film badges are concerned. Proper record should be maintained in each case under the supervision of a Radiation Safety officer certified by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB).

3. Proper radiation protection devices should be available in the Department.

4. If the Radiographer is assisting with the Radiologists or working with portable X-ray, he should wear lead apron.

5. The safety codes of AERB should be strictly followed while planning for installation of X-ray equipment.

6. The X-ray equipment should be periodically calibrated and quality assurance procedure should be conducted.

7. The X-ray unit should be typed approved by AERB with the scientific and technical support from BARC.

8. Radiographers should undergo periodical training as a part of continuing education in respect of safety and accuracy of handling the X-ray equipment.

9. In case of accidental exposure, it is the duty of the Radiation Safety officer and the employer to inform BARC immediately.

10. Radiographers should have an annual medical check up and the record of the same should be maintained.

11. The issue about private Radiology Departments in smaller laces who may be employing unskilled workers as attendants who may get continuous exposures needs also to be addressed.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-(PROF. A.S. BAIS)
DY. DIRECTOR GENERAL(M)
Copy for information to Hospital Section, D/o Health